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THE VAN DYCK EXPOSITION AT ANTWERP.

To the Editor of THE COLLECTOR AND ART CRITIC.

Sir: A few visits to this grand array of productions from the variegated brush of the greatest disciple of Rubens are most impressive. The excellent hanging of the pictures upon an olive-green background, with plenty of wall space around them, is admirable. Although the best work of Van Dyck is not here, for nothing has been sent from the Hermitage or Genoa, still the committee has succeeded in gathering over a hundred paintings. Twelve came from the museum at Antwerp, twelve from Brussels, seven from churches, while England sent thirty-nine, France sixteen, Austria five, Germany four, Poland six, Holland one, Russia two, and Italy four. As it is supposed that there are at least 350 canvases of Van Dyck in England, it will be seen that much that might have enriched this exhibition is absent.

Still, it is a great study to witness the different styles in which Van Dyck worked. He changed many times not only his manner but also his color. There are here portraits which might be confounded with those of Rubens, Virgins which might have been painted by the Italians, and again in some of his English work his color is dull, although never losing his dream of elegance—yet spite of all he is ever himself. Van Dyck was of an exceedingly nervous temperament, and his hand as impressionable as his spirit. Here we see a portrait which is gross, and in which the matter transcends the soul; there one in which color, style, touch, all is changed, painted with rapid strokes, with breadth, with the disdain of finish of the most modern work; then again in his English period he may be most complete, even labored, the nuance of tints melting, delicate in delineation of textures, deep in his backgrounds. Van Dyck had never the sureness of instinct which Rubens possessed, he was too many-sided. Yet the fire of his genius is ever bright and flashing.

I rather give this impression of the master, produced by a survey of all the work shown here, than a *Catalogue raisonné*.

There are also shown over 400 photographs, gravures and etchings, which render complete this homage of posterity to the great Flemish master.

P. N. DE VRIES.

Antwerp, Aug. 18, 1899.

Art Notes.

One of the most interesting of the coterie that styles itself "The Ten American Painters" is Frank W. Benson, who was met recently by a correspondent somewhere on the New England coast, where he was painting whatever appealed to his fancy. His duties as instructor of the life classes at the Museum of Fine Arts, together with numerous portrait commissions, have been so confining that he finds great enjoyment just now in roaming among unwonted scenery and recording the impressions of the hour. His figure and portrait work is attracting ever-increased attention, while among the interesting contributions to the Congressional Library seven mural paintings—the Four Seasons and three panels representing the Graces—are from his brush. His "Portrait of a Boy" was purchased in 1897 by the Carnegie Gallery for the Chronological Collection. Several honors have deservedly come to him.

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Posterdom is at last waking up. It is with pleasure that more artistic productions are seen on the hoardings. The Hyomei posters are a step in advance, as were the Brighton Beach announces of Payn's electric display. The "Wanamaker" sheets at the Elevated Railroad stations are generally tasteful, and the theatres are following suit. An imported drawing by John Hassall, the English artist, gives a striking scene from "The Old Way"; the posters for Crane's "Peter Stuyvesant" and Broadhurst's "Why Smith Left Home" are attractive, and *mirabile dictu*, even Charles Frohman has left the upper case fat type and presents Annie Russell's announcement in an artistic manner.

The brothers Leyendecker are turning out some remarkably clever posters in Chicago.

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A coincidence of fate occurred in the death of two of the sculptors engaged on the Dewey arch, Caspar Buberl being followed within a few days by Giovanni Turini into the dark valley. Buberl was a sculptor of the old school, following the classic lines of Rome, and best known for the many military statues which he executed after the Civil War, especially noteworthy being the bronze work and medals for the New York State monument on the battlefield of Gettysburg. The frieze in bas relief, 1,100 feet long and three feet

wide, representing the story of the Civil War, which adorns the Pension Office at Washington, and the bas reliefs on the Garfield Memorial in Lake View Cemetery, Cleveland, are of his hands.

Turini was born in Italy, and came to this country after serving under Garibaldi. He is best known as the author of the Bolivar statue in Central Park, although more creditable work was turned out by him.

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And when going to press information comes of the demise of a third artist engaged on the preparations for the Dewey festivities. Frank E. Crane was busily occupied with decorative propositions for the great gala days, when death called him. He was one of the most distinguished designers in his artistic line.

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A subscriber sent me recently, with his compliments, an interesting little volume, published by Johnstone, of Edinburgh (Scriveners, New York), entitled "The Scottish Clans and their Tartans." The interesting history of the thirty-one clans is accompanied with colored plates of the tartans used by the Highlanders, some clans having from one to five various tartans, such as the common clan tartan, the Chief's tartan, worn only by himself and heir, the Dress tartan, the Hunting tartan, and Mourning tartan. These plates are considered to be absolutely correct, having been taken thread by thread from the actual cloth, not from any previously printed work.

Many of these tartans must have been in existence as early as the XVth century, as there is in existence a charge and discharge of John, Bishop of Glasgow, Treasurer to King James III., 1471: "Ane elne and ane halve of blue Tartane, to lyne his gowne of cloth of gold £1. 10s. (Scots); four elne and one halve of Tartane, for a spawort aboun his credill, price ane elne 10s. £2. 5s." It is therefore surprising to note how perfectly the laws of elementary and complementary colors seem to have been understood. The simultaneous contrast, the orchestration of colors, is carried out perfectly, and it were well if these Scotch tartans were studied by those who are searching for the secrets of optical mixture.

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The series of drawings which Will H. Low finished some time ago to illustrate a new edition of that mournful tale which Keats sung about the maiden Lamia is on exhibition at the Detroit Museum of Art. The artist does not present her in the repulsive guise of the old mythological story, but pictures her as an innocent, loving maiden, fair enough to win the youth Lycius. The pure beauty and free conception of these drawings show the warm sympathy Low felt for his subject, and reveal his breadth of artistic genius, which is not alone confined to the mural decorative work for which he is best known.

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There is apparent an increasing interest in pictures of the American aborigines. Poor Lo is being portrayed in all the glory of his warpaint and stolid physiognomy. Burbank, Cameron, Couse, Remington, Farney, Sharpe, have greatly contributed to immortalize the Indian before the onslaught of civilization and rum will make him a memory. The Chicago publication "Brush and Pencil," which gives a monthly lithograph of Rain-in-the-Face, Spotted-Dog, Zi-You-Wee-Teh-Ze-Sah, and other worthies, has done much to arouse interest in this ethnological study.

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The September "Salt-Water Number" of the *Century* contains an appreciative short note on Winslow Homer, "A Painter of the Sea," by Wm. A. Coffin. The excellent series of pen and ink and wash drawings, illustrative of Mrs. Van Rensselaer's articles on the French Cathedrals, by Joseph Pennell, adds greatly to his fame, those in the present number being remarkably beautiful; perspective difficulties are overcome with ease, while the selection is picturesque and thoroughly in harmony with the facile pen of the author.

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Catalogues Nos. 190 and 191 are to hand from Bernard Quaritch giving a list with prices affixed of some illuminated and decorated mediæval manuscripts, rare and valuable books relating to the fine arts and of the library of M. Ch. Schaefer. Booklovers might find something of interest in Mr. Quaritch's offers.

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It is rumored that Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan, who is known as a bibliophile, is the owner of a fine copy of the Mazarin Bible. This, if true, gives us five in New York, the oldest being the one owned by Mr. James Lenox. The Hamilton Cole-Brayton Ives copy has now come back, brought by Mr. James W. Ellsworth

from Chicago. This we may attribute to smoke, for were it not that the Bible and other rare books, together with his pictures, were getting ruined by smoke, he would not have bought a house and brought his treasures to this city. It is also rumored that the Ashburnham copy on vellum is owned by Dean Hoffman, of the General Theological Seminary, and that a modest but wealthy collector, whose name is not given, is also the happy possessor of the fifth copy. Therefore, although New York may not be as large as Chicago, or as learned as Boston, she has the proud distinction of owning five Mazarin Bibles—a distinction, I am tempted to believe, not shared by any other city.

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The *School Weekly* of Chicago contains an appreciative review of the work done by Professor Frank Forrest Frederick of the University of Illinois with the art classes which he has gathered at Macatawa Park, Mich. It appears that this capable teacher has the true thought of art instruction, viz.: he aims to direct his scholars in their endeavors to learn from the greatest of all teachers, Nature. As a result the work of the students shows as much variety as human character shows, differing from the results of some schools, where the work turned out is all of a cut and dried pattern, like a child's Spencerian copy book.

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On a recent visit to the Chicago Art Institute I had the pleasure to view the exhibition of the work of the Sculpture Classes.

In the center was a replica, on much reduced scale, of the widely discussed fountain, which had been designed by some ten girl students of Lorado Taft's class, and which had been seen in heroic size at the south side of the building. The impression conveyed was most satisfactory. With surroundings of overhanging trees in some quiet, cool, little lake, where the rim of the fountain could be changed to some more appropriate setting, these sportive naiads would show a most creditable performance of sculptural skill. The minor faults of execution incident to the restricted time in which this plaster sketch was executed could easily be remedied. He is a capricious critic, indeed, who would condemn this work as it stands for reason of minor defects in modelling. The idea conveyed, the thought expressed, is most happily chosen. The nudes are perfectly chaste, in fact it is an indication of progressive enlightenment to recall that in all the criticisms very little fault has been found with this manifestation of "the nude in art."

There should be some Chicago art lovers willing to bear the expense to perfect and put in permanent form this embellishment of a sylvan retreat.

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The twentieth annual report of the Art Institute of Chicago, just received, has the gratifying intelligence that that institution is now out of debt, whereby an interest charge of \$4,000 will be saved. The Library Building, through the munificence of Mr. Martin A. Ryerson, is now in course of erection. The Fullerton Memorial Hall, dedicated last November, is a gem of its kind. Mrs. D. K. Pearson donated an exceedingly valuable collection of over 16,000 carbon photographs, illustrative of Old Masters and Modern Painters, which are of easy access in the Library, and form a source for study possessed by no other institution.

At a recent visit I was particularly impressed with the judicious care shown in the selection of the sculpture casts, which form a historical survey of this art, most instructive, if not exhaustive. There is a snap and vigor in the management of this institution which might form an example to some older museum trustees.

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The unrivaled collection of Burns' Editions brought together by Mr. Wm. R. Smith, superintendent of the Botanic Gardens in Washington, D. C., will, in the event of Mr. Smith's death, find a home in the Carnegie Library in Pittsburg, Pa. The collection comprises 1,000 volumes, relating to the writings of the great Scotch poet, including 230 separate editions of Burns' poems, of these 90 are American. Many of these are exceedingly rare and very valuable, for instance the "Second American," a small volume printed in Philadelphia in 1788, sells for \$125. Much regret is expressed that this collection could not have been left to the Congressional Library, where Librarian Young was willing to set apart a special alcove for its reception.

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It is of interest to note that the most prominent American sculptor, Augustus St. Gaudens, will be represented at the Luxembourg in Paris, where several of his works will shortly be placed on exhibition. This is a merited distinction for one who stands in the front rank of living sculptors, few if any surpassing him in masterly design and execution.

The Book Auction season opens early this year. Bangs & Co. will commence dispensing their good things the middle of this month. Of the two catalogues at hand the one announcing the sales on the 18th and 19th inst. promises some *bonnes bouches* for the bibliophile.

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The New Jersey Historical Society may erect a handsome library building in Branch Brook Park, Newark, with an art gallery and a museum connected with it. A site selected in the park by Dr. J. Ackerman Coles is favored by the trustees. If the park commissioners give permission a building will probably be erected after the style of the Metropolitan Museum in Central Park, at a cost of \$100,000. The Historical Society would occupy the central building, the art gallery one wing, and the museum the other.

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ARTIST (showing picture)—Now, my dear Gilmer, give me your candid opinion of my wood nymphs.

GILMER—Perfect, my dear boy. One would actually think they were made of wood.—*Exchange.*

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The following descriptions of calendars for 1900 coming from R. H. Russell show a very attractive line of art work. Of those in color, the "Bird Calendar," 12 designs by H. H. Bennett; the "Revolutionary Calendar," 12 drawings by Ernest Peixotto, formerly one of the artists of *The Lark*; the "Zodiac Calendar," designed by Chester Loomis; and the "Pickaninny Calendar," drawn by E. W. Kemble, are the ones offered; while new editions of the "Golf Calendar," drawn by Edward Penfield, and supplemented by several new designs for 1900, E. W. Kemble's "Coon Calendar," the "Chinese Children's," and the "Sports and Seasons Calendars," are announced.

There are also four calendars by Frederic Remington, called respectively "The Soldier," "Indian," "Frontier," and "Cowboy" Calendars. An "Animal Calendar," by Frank Verbeck, twelve animals in a new and striking treatment of black and white, and "The Cupid Calendar," designed by J. Campbell Phillips, are all included.

Foreign Notes.

The Grand Prix de Rome, after the arduous task which was described in a previous number, has been awarded to Louis Roger, a pupil of Jean Paul Laurens and Benjamin Constant. The subject assigned to the painters competing this year was taken from Musset's "Rolla": "Hercules, fatigued by his eternal task, seated himself between two ways. He saw Pleasure inviting him; he followed Virtue, which seemed to him more beautiful."

Of the paintings by the ten contestants the criticism has been made that "they showed little originality of conception and composition, but remarkable skill in drawing and the use of colors. Aside from the coloring of the backgrounds, otherwise more or less conventional, the canvases might all belong to the era of the First Empire, so strongly do classical traditions survive in the school."

Only one of the young painters ventured to represent the two female figures fully draped and at the same time give Virtue a face calculated to make the choice of the demigod at all plausible. The others showed Virtue as stern and forbidding.

Although it is said that Roger's work is distinctly along academic lines and lacks freedom, it must still be remembered that the advantages connected with this prize will enable him fully to develop his individuality, as it did in the case of Besnard, Morot, Clarin and many others.

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At a recent Dickens sale held at Sotheby's in London some remarkable prices were realized. An edition of the original parts of the "Pickwick Papers," presented by Charles Dickens to his sister-in-law, Mary Hogarth, brought £105, and other copies were sold for £85 and £63 a copy. An "American Notes" presented by Dickens to Thomas Carlyle sold for £61. The original autograph manuscript of Dickens' "Battle of Life," on fifty quarto pages, brought £400. Forster's "Life of Dickens," containing autograph letters, manuscripts and portraits of literary celebrities, was knocked down for £500, and Dickens' "cash book," when he was in the office of Mr. Blackmore, the lawyer, showing Dickens' salary to have been 13s. 6d. (about \$3.37) per week, fetched £95.